



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF STATE ETHICS

LOBBYING FACT SHEET

Registering as a lobbyist does **not** mean a group must discontinue or temper its lobbying efforts. Connecticut's lobbying laws are in place to ensure transparency in government by showing the citizens of the State who is spending money on lobbying, and its effect on our legislative process, irrespective of the message and who is doing the lobbying. Lobbying laws disclose sources and paths of money; they in no way limit lobbying activities.

Lobbying is defined as “communicating directly or soliciting others to communicate with any official or his staff in the legislative or executive branch of government or in a quasi-public agency, for the purpose of influencing any legislative or administrative action . . .” Conn.Gen.Stat. § 1-91(k).

Individuals or entities are required by law to register as a lobbyist with the Office of State Ethics (OSE) if they:

- Expend or agree to expend \$2,000 or more in a calendar year on lobbying; *OR*
- Receive or agree to receive \$2,000 or more in a calendar year for lobbying.

The \$2,000 registration threshold applies to any combination of legislative or administrative lobbying and also includes expenditures for activities in furtherance of lobbying, such as expenditures for research, reports, polls, media buys, activities fostering good will, office expenses, secretarial or paralegal salaries, etc. – essentially all of the activities that support the actual lobbying efforts. In addition, only the party, usually a corporation or non-profit organization, expending \$2000 or more must register – not its members (unless they are expending \$2,000 or more apiece).

There are two types of lobbyists who register with the OSE:

- A Client Lobbyist is the party paying for lobbying services on its behalf. In other words, the client lobbyist is expending or agreeing to expend the threshold amount of \$2,000 or more in a calendar year.
- A Communicator Lobbyist receives payment and does the actual lobbying legwork (i.e., *communicating*). A Communicator Lobbyist receives or agrees to receive \$2,000 or more for lobbying activities in a calendar year. Communicator Lobbyists can take different forms:
 - Individual
 - Member of a Business Organization (e.g., a firm or association that employs a number of lobbyists)
 - In-house Communicator (a lobbyist who is a salaried employee of a Client Lobbyist)

It is important to note that all lobbyists, regardless of their message, have the same rights and responsibilities under the law.